



May 16, 2016

Honorable Klint Kesto, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
S-888 House Office Building  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909

Greetings Chair Kesto and Members of the House Judiciary Committee;

The American Association of University Women of Michigan, in keeping with its mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research, **supports HJR GG, the resolution that would add protections against sex discrimination to Michigan's Constitution.**

Some important points to consider:

- Equal treatment under the law is a basic and fundamental value of American democracy.
- The current Article I, Section 2 of Michigan's 1963 Constitution contains a prohibition against discrimination because of religion, race, color and national origin, but not sex. Usually people are surprised to learn that our framers did not include a general sex discrimination prohibition.
- Constitutional equality based on sex is contained in 23 other state constitutions. The latest is Oregon, which adopted it in 2014.
- This resolution, if approved by two-thirds of the Michigan House and Senate, would go on the ballot for voters to decide at the next general election.
- A Constitutional Equality Amendment would give men and women in Michigan one more avenue to remedy sex discrimination that might not be covered under state statute.
- There is no taxpayer cost to inclusion of sex in Michigan's equal protection clause other than the cost of putting it on the ballot for a vote along with all the candidate names.
- The roles of men and women in society have changed considerably since our Constitution was adopted; our Constitution needs to reflect that change.

Michigan needs to bring its constitution into the 21st century by adding "sex" to its equal protection clause. The AAUW of Michigan urges you to vote Yes to put a Constitutional Equality Amendment on the ballot for voters to decide.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Haynes  
President